



Volume 5, Issue 1

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
Jeff Morales, Director

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High-Technology Snow Removal

As winter wallops California's mountainous vacation destinations and travelers are eager to arrive at their favorite get-aways, paths inevitably cross and snow flurries erase all known highway landmarks to traveling motorists.

The effect can be "vehicle vertigo;" the cause, white invisibility in all directions. Chain installation begins and cars are lined up waiting for roads to be cleared.

Much to the chagrin of authorities, inevitably families pile out of their cars with cameras and snow sleds in hand to take a mini vacation on that designated highway winter wonderland. Adults become children again and roads become playgrounds.

That is where Caltrans comes into play. Equipment operators have a challenge to clear the road for traveling motorists.

That formidable task has become less difficult with new magnetic-driven snow removal technology that guides a snowplow to stay in the middle of a lane and tells the operator which direction to turn the steering wheel to stay on course.

Similar to an airline pilot flying in dense fog, snowplow operators now have an "autopilot" to guide them through treacherous whiteout situations.

Using sensors mounted behind the front tires, "RoadView" technology detects magnets roughly the size of a cigar, which have been embedded in the pavement approximately every four feet in the center of the lane.

Magnetic codes are translated into pertinent data and displayed on a monitor in the cab of the plow truck. From that screen, the operator deciphers not only lane and steering information but also the plow's whereabouts on the highway system. Milepost marker information is displayed, allowing the operator to send for emergency assistance in any specific location.

Still in the testing phase, the system employs magnets installed under approximately seven miles of roadway in both directions of Interstate 80 in the Sierra Nevada and five miles in both directions on Highway 299 near Burney.



Through "RoadView" technology, Caltrans snowplow operators now have an "autopilot" that can guide them through treacherous whiteout conditions.

So far, three Caltrans plows have been adapted to use this high-technology system. Often leading a caravan of other snowplows, these trucks blaze the trail for additional workers and winter travelers.

The "RoadView" technology includes a dual radar unit attached to the grille that looks 100 meters ahead of the plow and warns of any snow-hidden vehicles, trees, people or other obstacles and potential hazards in its path.

Often following behind the snowplow is the Advanced Rotary Plow, a

21-ton monster of a machine with magnet guidance technology. Using automatic steering, it gobbles up snow left behind from the plows and shoots it clear of the roadway.

While previous snowblower procedures included hugging a snow-covered guardrail for guidance, the new magnetic-driven technology allows the machinery to stay a precise distance away from the guardrail, preventing guardrail damage.

The snowblower, equipped with a collision warning system, is more than 28 feet long, has a 440-gallon fuel tank and can remove 4,000 tons of snow every hour.

These new high-technology inventions are a joint effort between Caltrans, the Advanced Highway Maintenance & Construction Technology (AHMCT) Research Center at the University of California Davis, and the University of California Berkeley's Partners for Advanced Transit and Highways (PATH) Center.

"This is just the beginning of what's to come with new developments in snow removal," said Caltrans Project Engineer Bob Battersby. "We are continually working to improve the safety and efficiency of our winter operations for the traveling public."

'A New Day in California' . . . Sunne Wright McPeak

One of California's most enduring qualities is its ability to renew itself constantly by offering endless possibilities to those who live, work and make their future here.

As the Secretary for the Business, Transportation and Housing (BT&H) Agency -- representing 14 departments, a \$12.4 billion combined budget and 47,000 employees -- I want to ensure that each of California's 33 million residents shares in that dream.

We are witnessing a new day in California. As a result, the Agency has an historic opportunity to turn that dream into reality for every Californian. These departments, and their employees, represent the heart of state government. Business, transportation and housing: what could be more fundamental to the state's economy, reckoned as the fifth largest in the world, and to the lives of its individual citizens?

Departments within this Agency build the state's roads and public transportation system, enforce its laws, license its drivers and make its mobility system safer. We help finance people's homes, regulate banking institutions and the state's booming real estate establishment. We have a hand in controlling the sales of alcoholic beverages, managing its health care and patients, as well as operating the state government's computer network.

In short, we play a leading role in a diverse set of government functions. Yet, we have one major mission in common: to serve and touch the lives of individual Californians.

One of our most pressing challenges is to rebuild the state's aging infrastructure, which includes such institutions as hospitals, schools and transportation facilities, just to name a few.

For example, California's 15,000 miles of state highways have historically been seen not merely as the state's life-line, but also as the gateway to the rest of America and the world. In California, where one job in seven is linked to international trade, we move some \$800 billion in commodities every year. The state is a gateway to the world. In 2000, more than 16 percent of the nation's exports went through California.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has nearly \$6

billion in highway construction underway this year. That's a major shot in the arm for the state's economy. An investment of \$1 billion in construction supports more than 26,000 full-time jobs and generates almost \$3 billion in California's economic activity.

With 21,000 employees, Caltrans is the largest department in the Agency. It works with local and regional transportation partners to improve mobility across California, by connecting affordable housing to jobs through a network of roads, rail and public transportation.

In fact, all the BT&H departments continue to cooperate with local and regional partners to provide a high level of service to the public. They recognize that regional cooperation is essential. We are not independent entities. Rather, we are Californians working toward common goals.

Every department within the agency has an important role to play. The California Highway Patrol (CHP), with its 7,000 uniformed officers, keeps watch of our highways and provides easier access for trucks from either side of the international border.

The Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) obtains and administers traffic safety grants, helping to reduce deaths, injuries, and property damage that result from traffic collisions. And the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) strives to make the State Highway System safer by licensing drivers and helping to weed out unsafe ones.

Six departments play vital roles in financing and in making home ownership an achievable dream for Californians. For example, the Department of Corporations licenses and regulates securities brokers and financial planners, while the Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) oversees state-chartered financial institutions.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) advocates for housing, develops building codes for manufactured homes, administers loans and provides information on housing and mortgage financing. The California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) helps to provide affordable loans and mortgage insurance to families with moderate incomes.

Sister agencies, the Department of Real Estate (DRE) and Office of Real

Estate Appraisers (OREA) protect homebuyers, whose homes represent the largest investment they will ever make during their lives.

In part, through the effort and cooperation with these departments, California's housing agency will continue to be a bright spot in the state economy. However, we must do more. In concert with regional planners, state transportation and housing planners can work together to establish "livable" and sustainable communities -- where vehicles, public transportation, bicycles and pedestrians have a place in making neighborhoods stronger, safer and more enjoyable.

Two other related departments are instrumental in health issues. The Department of Managed Health Care aggressively works toward an accountable managed health care system, while the Office of the Patient Advocate ensures that consumers' needs are met in the managed health care field. By keeping Californians well, these two departments aid in keeping the California economy healthy and strong.

The Department of Alcoholic Beverages Control (ABC) has police powers over the manufacture, importation, distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages. Licensed outlets generate some \$500 million in state revenues.

And the Stephen P. Teale Date Center provides information technology services and products to state agencies, allowing all of us to do our jobs better and more productively.

Each of these departments has unique responsibilities. But they have a number of factors in common.

Each one of them plays a unique role in making California safer, more efficient and stronger. Every one is key in building up California's aging infrastructure -- estimated to need as much as \$100 billion in rehabilitation. And all play a part in building the state's economy and making the state a magnet to the rest of the nation and the world.

I congratulate you each on your accomplishments, and challenge you to find even better ways to serve the people of California. And, I look forward to working with you to make California an even better place to live.

Happy New Year: Caltrans' First Step into Tomorrow

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Director Jeff Morales

Several developments within the last two months have helped to propel California into new directions, and they should be acknowledged here.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced the appointment of Sunne Wright McPeak as the Secretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing

Agency. A former member of the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors and CEO of the Bay Area Economic Forum, Secretary McPeak has wide experience in the areas of transportation, housing, and sustainable economic development.

We welcome her, and look forward to working with her. You can read some of her initial thoughts in a column in this edition of the CT News.

And secondly, with the completion and dedication of the Carquinez Bridge earlier this year, the Department now moves forward on another major project, the landmark San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge.

Early last month, the Department received some good financial news. The construction firm of C.C. Myers, Inc., was the low bidder to build a temporary approach between the Yerba Buena Island and the new SFOBB. The company's \$71 million bid came in significantly below the Caltrans estimate of \$93 million.

Now, we begin moving full-steam ahead.

We have been making steady progress since January 2002 when ground was broken on the new span that will serve as the Bay Area's signature transportation project of the 21st century. In fact, the structure is sometimes described not simply as one bridge but a combination of bridges.

They include the suspension bridge, the elegant Skyway viaduct, as well as the Oakland "touch down" and Yerba Buena transition structures. With a target completion date of 2009, the \$2.9 billion bridge will complete a process begun in 1989 when the Loma Prieta earthquake showed that the bridge would need either rebuilding or extensive retrofitting for seismic safety.

Today, we face the possibilities of a new calendar year. Along with you, I am proud of the accomplishments of the past and look forward to the challenges and innovations that 2004 will bring.

Happy New Year to the entire Caltrans family.

CalEPA Salutes Caltrans for Reducing Hazardous Wastes

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) has formally recognized Caltrans for its participation in a program to reduce hazardous wastes through the use of better pollution prevention and best management practices.

The innovative Vehicle Service and Repair (VSR) Shop Program focuses on reducing hazardous waste in state vehicles undergoing routine maintenance and servicing. The program, sponsored by Cal/EPA's Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC), is expected to save each certified facility as much as \$20,000 a year.

Facilities participating in the model shop program receive free training and technical assistance in areas such as replacing solvent cleaners with water-based systems, antifreeze recycling technologies, reusable and by-pass oil filters, oil extension programs, dry shop spill prevention, cleanup methods, and storm water management.

The DTSC assesses a shop's pollution prevention activities, notes any environmental violations and then certifies the facility as an official DTSC pollution prevention shop.

"Caltrans is an innovator in finding ways to protect the environment," said Director Jeff Morales. "Along with our own ef-

forts to 'green the fleet,' this program has helped us to move even further in that direction."

This is one of many ways that Caltrans advances environmental protection. So far, Caltrans shops in Sacramento Headquarters, Fresno, North Hollywood, San Bernardino and El Centro have been certified. Others are in the process of working toward this accomplishment.

"Reducing waste and pollution, through efficient service of automobiles has a significant impact on the environment. These efforts can increase productivity while reducing operating costs and they have the important benefit of reducing employee exposure to harmful chemicals," said Ed Lowry, Director of DTSC.

The five Caltrans model shops that have received certification will serve as an example for other State agencies to follow in lowering costs and achieving environmental compliance through cer-

tification as a Pollution Prevention Model Shop.

For additional information about the program and training materials, call 1-800-700-5854 or visit:

www.dtsc.ca.gov



Southern California Wildfire Recovery

By Tim Watkins
District 8 Public Information Officer

The California Transportation Foundation relief fund for the Department's autumn fire victims has netted more than \$19,000 and is still climbing. Individual district funds have also received substantial contributions.

The Southern California fires ripped through hillsides, roads and communities creating chaos for many. Devastation quickly turned to restoration, however, as the Department jumped into action, assessed damage and secured contractors to repair damaged roads -- an important step in the recovery process.

As the Department opened its checkbook to cover repair costs for guardrails, signs, and fire-stripped slopes, so did employees. Caltrans employees generously gave their time and resources to benefit co-workers who lost their homes to the inferno. Individual donations, bake sales and various other statewide fund-raising efforts generated thanks from those in need.

"My family and I would like to say thank you to our Caltrans family," one employee wrote in an e-mail. "Your prayers, generosity, kindness and the overall humanity was demonstrated, not only to my family, but to all the fire victims in our District. Thank you for giving from your hearts."

"During this time of need Caltrans employees have responded with a sense of compassion and caring that is truly noteworthy," said Darla Matthews, Statewide Fire Relief Fund Liaison. "This only serves to remind us once again of how much we are more like a large family rather than a group of co-workers."

The challenge to restore roads and homes isn't over. Guardrail and signs continue to be installed, and even though plans are in place to help those who lost their homes, the effort to feed, clothe and shelter those in need requires additional support.

To donate, send checks to the California Transportation Foundation, P.O. Box 163453, Sacramento, CA 95816.



Donations are tax deductible and the cancelled check will act as the receipt. The memo section of the check should identify your district and the words "Fire Relief."

Coastal Roads, Bridges on Firm Ground Following Quake, Thanks to Caltrans

On Dec. 22, a 6.5 magnitude earthquake rolled through the state's central coast, killing two people (due to falling buildings) in Paso Robles, injuring 50 others and causing minor damage to the state's transportation system in District 5.

Almost immediately afterward, Caltrans inspectors fanned out across the affected area, but found no major damage on the region's roads and bridges -- and no transportation-related fatalities.

The District Office in San Luis Obispo was temporarily evacuated, but reoccupied after minor damage was evaluated. Pavement on Highway 46 suffered some warping. Highways 1 and 41 experienced falling rock. And the Templeton Maintenance Station had minor problems, but remained open.

The quake, centered some seven miles northeast of San Simeon, was in stark contrast to the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake in the Bay Area and 1994 Northridge shaker -- both of which caused heavy damage to transportation facilities.

The San Simeon quake's semi-rural location was one factor for the relatively light damage. However, another factor may have been Caltrans' progress in learning how to retrofit old bridges and to build new ones to resist the forces of major earthquakes.

Since the 1971 Sylmar earthquake -- and increasingly since 1989 -- Caltrans has significantly improved its understanding of seismic safety. Based on Caltrans-sponsored research from the University of California, Berkeley, and UC San Diego, the Department has applied such innovations as steel-encased and thicker concrete columns, cable supports, hinge restrainers and improved footings.

The Department's engineers now encircle certain columns with steel, or, in some instances, an advanced woven fiber casing. Many bridge footings are made larger and given more support by placing additional pilings in the ground or by using steel tie down rods to better anchor the footings to the earth.

"Hinge seat extensions" enlarge the size of the hinges that connect sections of the bridge decks and help to prevent them from separating during severe ground movements. In addition, "cable supports" link a highway's bed firmly to its support columns.

These strategies can vary from bridge to bridge and are based in part on the "maximum credible earthquake" that could be expected in a particular location. Other factors in determining a set of strategies include the nearest active earthquake fault, the type of geology under the bridge and the structure's original design.

After the 1989 Loma Prieta quake, which caused extensive damage to the Cypress Structure in Oakland and to the San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge, Caltrans intensified its program to identify and strengthen bridges for earthquake safety.

Safety Wins and So Does Caltrans District 7

By Judy Gish District 7
Public Information Officer

How do you replace the pavement on nearly three miles of one of Southern California's busiest freeways while safely accommodating traffic around the third most active port complex in the world?

The answer, of course, is "very carefully."

The California Department of Transportation District 7 received national recognition in November with its innovative "freeway-crossover" traffic-staging plan to construct the Long Beach Freeway (I-710) Long Life Pavement project.

The plan required precise coordination between the Department and the contractor, law enforcement and emergency services, the ports, local agencies, businesses, the media and the public.

Project results were so successful that the District won the 2003 Roadway Workzone Safety Awareness Award in the category "Innovations in Technology (Methodology - Large Project)." The national award is sponsored by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) and the National Safety Council.

The project was implemented in stages, the most critical being a series of eight 55-hour weekend maneuvers that closed one direction of the freeway for construction, and shifted two-way traffic to the other side.

A moveable barrier system allowed free-flow traffic in both directions while the contractor worked without traffic interference. An elaborate Traffic Management Plan (TMP) encouraged motorists to use alternate routes around the construction area, saving an estimated 545,000 vehicle-hours of delay, or roughly \$5.5 million in lost economic activity.

The TMP comprised three parts: Motorist Information Strategies, an Incident Management Program, and a Public Awareness Campaign.

Motorist Information Strategies used more than 40 permanent and portable Changeable Message Signs (CMS) and provided real-time traffic conditions and route information. Three strategically placed Highway Advisory Radios (HAR) supplemented the CMS information.

Alternate route and detour signs guided motorists safely through and around the work zone.

Caltrans' Advanced Traveler Information System, on the Internet, provided current traffic conditions and travel advisories, which helped the public plan routes around the construction activities.

The Incident Management Program used an on site command post to coordinate Traffic Management Teams, which included California Highway Patrol officers, and Freeway Service

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District 7 received national recognition for its "freeway-crossover" traffic-staging plan on the I-710. Shown above, the scenario included a moveable barrier system to allow free-flow traffic in both directions while the contractor worked without traffic interference.

Earthquake

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Phase I of the program, funded by the state gas tax and now completed, strengthened 1,039 bridges across the state for a cost of \$812 million.

The \$1.35 billion Phase II, following the 1994 Northridge quake, was made possible through the 1996 passage of Proposition 192 bonds. Ninety-eight (98) percent, or 1,132 of the 1,155 bridge projects, have been completed. All were in Districts 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Meanwhile, seven of the state's nine toll bridges have been undergoing earthquake strengthening for approximately \$4.64 billion (by way of legislation in 1997 and 2001).

Five of the seven have been completely retrofitted -- the Benicia-Martinez, San Mateo-Hayward and Carquinez bridges

in the Bay Area; the Vincent Thomas bridge in Los Angeles; and the San Diego-Coronado Bridge.

The projects now underway are the Richmond / San Rafael Bridge, San Francisco / Oakland Bay Bridge west span and the replacement of the SFOBB's east span.

And finally the Department, along with Los Angeles and Santa Clara counties, are the lead agencies for 1,211 local bridges needing work. Of that total, 454 projects (38 percent) have been completed.

California is prime "earthquake county," and Caltrans understands that the state can expect major tremors in the future. At the same time, the Department has completed a massive amount of work

over the last few years -- progress that should serve effectively to reduce damage to the state's transportation system in the case of a major earthquake.

When the next major earthquake hits the state, the people of California can be sure that Caltrans has developed the latest and best earthquake safety technology in the world. And California has committed nearly \$7 billion in state and federal funds to ensure that the technology is properly applied to its highways and bridges.



Rick Knapp Retires After Nearly Four Decades with Caltrans



District 1 Director Rick Knapp retired December 4 -- his 60th birthday -- after serving in the position for nearly nine years and for the Department for nearly four decades.

Knapp began his career in 1962 as an Engineering Student Trainee, working four summers in highway construction as a student. Immediately after graduating from the University of Nevada with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, he started work with the Division of Highways, District 1, in Eureka.

Drafted into the U. S. Army in 1966, he spent one year in Vietnam, designing bridges to replace those destroyed in combat.

After two years in the Army, Knapp returned to his engineering duties in Eureka. In 1972, he took a promotion as a Project Design Engineer in Los Angeles. Then in 1973, he joined the recently created Division of Transportation Planning to help develop the first State Transportation Plan.

Six years later, Knapp took advantage of a promotional opportunity to return to District 1 in Eureka. Two more promotions led him to become the District Director in December 1994.

Immediately after taking over as District Director, Knapp faced the biggest earthquake and the most severe winter storm damage in the District in 30 years. The 1994/95 winter storms led to \$100 million in storm damage, with 18 of 23 state highways being closed one or more times during the winter.

For much of the next three years, Knapp and his team faced the challenge of restoring and improving the highway system.

"I am proud of the job the District did in correcting the 400 storm damage locations we experienced during that winter," Knapp said. "We once again proved we could effectively restore highways even during difficult winter conditions."

Knapp then undertook a new program to correct perennial high maintenance/road closure locations so that the same locations didn't require attention every winter and during every storm.

His most important accomplishments include:

- Widening and realigning a two-mile high collision segment of U. S. Highway 101 at Cushing Creek, through the redwoods five miles south of Crescent City, a product of cooperative efforts with resource agencies and interest groups. Collisions have dropped by 80 percent.
- The innovative Safety Corridor on Highway 101 between Eureka and Arcata, a cooperative effort involving local and state law enforcement, the two cities, the county, and the Humboldt County Association of Governments. The project has reduced speeds by 10 mph and intersection collisions by 80 percent.
- Securing \$72 million in emergency funding from the Federal Highway Administration allowing the District to proceed with an emergency project to relocate Highway 101 at Confusion Hill, a project that will establish a safe and reliable highway at this critical location.
- A major upgrading of Highway 199 through the rugged Smith River Canyon to improve safety for all users.
- As chairman of the Context Sensitive Solutions Steering Committee, he developed a state policy that promoted flexibility in design and the right solution for the context. This led to new guidelines known as State Highway Main Streets. An example reflecting the new direction is the Willow Creek Services District on Highway 299, in which the District worked with the community on a Main Street improvement project to meet pedestrian and bicyclists' needs, and make the town more scenic and enjoyable.
- In May 2003, Knapp received the California Transportation Foundation's

coveted Charles H. Purcell Award for excellence in engineering management.

Over the years, Knapp committed the District to working more cooperatively with the public, other agencies and interest groups and formed several special community advisory committees.

As an avid bicyclist, Knapp helped form the Humboldt Bay Bicycle Commuters Association, which has been instrumental in the establishment of bike planning, bike lanes and bike parking in the Humboldt Bay Region.

A retirement dinner is scheduled for January 23. For information on the event, contact Helene Demling at (707) 445-6446.

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Patrol units (tow trucks).

An effective Public Awareness Campaign reduced potential congestion by encouraging voluntary rerouting and rescheduling of trips. A major portion of the campaign was the public outreach effort, which began with a press conference and a meeting with large employers in the area, followed by weekly press releases on lane closures and project status. Before the 55-hour closures started, Caltrans sent residents and businesses mailers containing a detailed map, project description, and closure and detour information. The Department set up a toll-free hotline number and an information web-site and placed advertisements in various media.

By reducing traffic along I-710 and managing traffic flowing through the corridor, Caltrans provided a safe environment for project workers and motorists. Paving was completed this fall with no safety-related incidents.

The new pavement is expected to have an extended life of 35 years, reducing the exposure of maintenance and construction crews to traffic in the future. Both the project and its implementation will serve as a model for rehabilitating aging roadways throughout the nation.

'Hats Off' to Caltrans Employees

On a regular basis, Caltrans employees receive appreciation letters by external customers for outstanding performance. One of those letters, as you will read below, gives a "hats off" to Caltrans employees. To expand on that concept, the CT News will begin carrying a "Hats Off" section on occasion to reflect well-deserved accolades to employees throughout the Department. This issue reflects only some of the numerous letters that were received over the last year. Keep up the good work!

(Editor's note: Letters can be submitted to Tamie McGowen for possible publishing. Letters may be edited for length and continuity.)

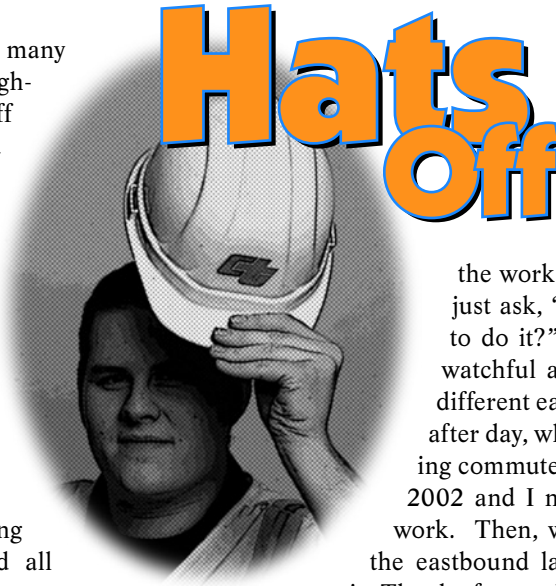
I wish to acknowledge the many Caltrans workers that keep our highways in a safe condition. Hats off to the people who pick up litter and paint out graffiti. The Caltrans workers do an outstanding job considering the budget cutbacks, the many miles that they have to maintain and the growing population that use our highways today. The Adopt A Highway Program is a great idea.

The Truxel Road Anti-Litter Campaign was an eye opener. I am glad to see the Sacramento Bee included an article on it. Ongoing Anti-Litter campaigns are needed all over America.

There are many that don't acknowledge the people responsible for a clean environment, but appreciate it. Thank you.

Leonard A. Triboli
West Sacramento, CA

(Editor's note: The anti-litter campaign featured a huge pile of trash displayed along westbound Interstate 80 during April, which is "Keep California Beautiful" month.)



I wanted to write a note to say thank you for the job that I consider very well done on the San Mateo Bridge project. I have watched the widening project from day one until the final completion on January 20, 2003. I have been impressed watching

the work in progress. I often wanted to stop and just ask, "How do you know what to do and how to do it?" (expand a bridge) and I followed with watchful anticipation to see something a little bit different each day. I watched these people work day after day, whatever the weather condition. My morning commute has been a total breeze since November 2002 and I never need to worry about being late to work. Then, when I heard on January 20, 2003, that the eastbound lanes were open, I could hardly believe it. Thanks for working so hard and so dedicated all these months to make drivers like me enjoy driving. I admire your hard work and dedication and expertise to complete a project so enormous in the length of time you took to complete. Thank you so much! From one Monday to Friday driver who greatly appreciates it!

Jackie Hutchings

I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank two Caltrans workers who recently found my wallet along the highway and returned it to me.

Thank you Jeff Sedgwick and Mark D. Vukich! I was especially touched that Mark would not accept the cash in my wallet as a reward. His reply was, "This is my job."

We often take for granted what our government employees do every day. I want everyone to know that these two men are examples of the integrity we depend on.

Pat Paulson
Graeagle, CA

The above is a Letter to the Editor that was published in the Feather River Bulletin on July 9, 2003.

It has been exactly 4 months and 7 days since I met you in my accident north of Vidal junction, and I am writing to say THANK YOU for BEING THERE! That day turned my life upside down quite literally. I wanted to express my sincere appreciation for what you did for me on that December afternoon. I don't know if I told you, but that was my birthday. I have never come so close to death as I did that day. I emerged from the accident almost physically unscathed, but the emotional scar continues to heal. You were there for a total stranger. You gave me a sense of peace during the traumatic event, and for that, I am very grateful. I remember how you cut the battery cables so that I would not be further injured by the airbag in case it deployed. I tell that story to everyone who asks about the accident. Again, warmest THANKS and sincere appreciation to "you."

Tony Caughlin

(Editor's Note: The letter above was written to Doug Nordgren, Caltrans Equipment Operator II, District 8)

Office of Landscape Architecture Sponsors Orphan in Africa

During the holiday season, many Caltrans offices adopt children or families who are less fortunate. Concerned about the orphan crisis in Africa due to HIV/AIDS, the Office of Landscape Architecture in District 4 has taken this generosity a step further and, on an ongoing basis, is sponsoring an orphaned child in Sierra Leone, Africa, through the All as One Foundation.

The Office of Landscape Architecture posts photos of Tiange Coomber, an eight-year-old with a radiant smile that belies her difficult start in life. Tiange's birth mother, Alimatu Coomber, died in June 1997 of a miscarriage. Due to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, Tiange's mother could not reach medical treatment. Tiange is currently living with her aunt who can no longer care for her.



Tiange Coomber, an 8-year old orphan in Africa, sponsored by District 4 Landscape Architecture, beams a radiant smile that belies her difficult start in life. Photo courtesy of the All as One Foundation.

All as One was created as a direct response to African children left orphaned and/or destitute by AIDS, civil wars, poverty and other hardships. The foundation currently has programs in Zimbabwe and Sierra Leone.

Stephen Lewis, United Nations Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, reports that teachers, police officers, government officials and other people vital to Africa's infrastructure, are dying in dramatic numbers. After extensive travels throughout Africa, he said, "The world has never seen this level of devastation."

The World Bank estimates that by the year 2010, there will be 35 million children orphaned due to the AIDS virus. This is in addition to the devastation caused by famine, war and other diseases.

After hearing this news, the Office of Landscape Architecture decided to do something about it. "In the face of such a devastating health crisis, we were specifically looking for an opportunity to make a more lasting impact than the typical once-a-year charitable contribution," said Lara Justine, Landscape Architect in District 4.

"We like the fact that we know our contributions are going to an individual child and we hope that focusing our efforts on Tiange can make a meaningful difference in her life."

More information on the All as One Foundation can be found at <http://www.allasone.org>

DO YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION ON HOW TO IMPROVE STATE OPERATIONS? IF SO, YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR AN AWARD! CONTACT THE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM AT (916) 227-9803 OR VISIT THE WEB SITE AT:

<http://admin.dot.ca.gov/hr/recognition/index.shtml>

Exams Schedule

The Caltrans Examination Office anticipates that the following examination bulletins will have a Final Filing date in January/ February.

Caltrans Bridge Maintenance Supervisor (Promo)
Graphic Designer II (Promo)
Graphic Designer III (Promo)
Heavy Equipment Bodyworker/Painter (Promo)
Supervisor, Tunnels & Tubes (Promo)

The following examinations allow for continuous filing:

Associate Right of Way Agent (Promo)
Caltrans Heavy Equipment Mechanic (Promo)
Caltrans Heavy Equipment Mechanic (Open)
Deputy Attorney III (Promo)
Deputy Attorney IV (Promo)
Transportation Surveyor, Caltrans (Open)
Transportation Surveyor -Party Chief, Caltrans (Open)

The following examinations allow for continuous filing on the Internet:

Senior Environmental Planner (Promo)
Senior Right of Way Agent (Promo)
Senior Transportation Engineer, Caltrans (Promo)

Visit our Web site at www.dot.ca.gov/hq/jobs for open, promotional, CEA and MSDP examinations.

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